





LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

Apostolic Labours an Evidence of
Christian Truth.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE HIS GRACE THE PRIMATE

IN THE CHAPEL OF LAMBETH PALACE

AT THE CONSECRATION OF

THE LORD BISHOP OF NASSAU,

ON ST. ANDREW'S DAY, 1863.

BY

HENRY PARRY LIDDON, M.A.

STUDENT OF CH. CH.; EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY;
AND ONE OF THE SELECT PREACHERS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

PUBLISHED BY COMMAND.

OXFORD & LONDON,
RIVINGTONS :

OXFORD,
JOHN HENRY AND JAMES PARKER.

1863.

A Sermon, &c.

ROMANS x. 18.

BUT I SAY, HAVE THEY NOT HEARD? YES VERILY, THEIR SOUND
WENT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS UNTO THE ENDS OF
THE WORLD.

ON the Feast of the Apostle who was first converted to Christ, and who opens the list of festivals in the Christian Year, it is obvious to attempt a consideration of the work of the Apostolate under that aspect which is suggested by St. Paul in the passage chosen from to-day's Epistle. The whole context is in its style one of the most obscure portions of the Epistle to the Romans. The structure and connexion are continually disjointed or broken by the introduction of quotations from the Old Testament: and in reading these quotations we are often supposed to be in possession of secondary or even of mystical senses, as well as of other underlying trains of thought which connect them. These, when detected and exhibited, enable us to trace the sequence of the argument, and to explain in detail the sense of a passage, which a too eager literalism might find hopelessly unintelligible. For the general scope of the Apostle is sufficiently plain. The Jew is taught his responsibilities in presence of the advancing Gospel from the pages of his Hebrew Bible. He learns to contrast the religion of the Synagogue with that of the Church, when viewed in its spirit, method, and end. And this, not from the lips of Evangelists, but from the books of

Leviticus and Deuteronomy^a. Prophets like Isaiah and Joel successively announce to him the reward of faith in Christ, and the intimate and beneficent nearness of the Lord of all to all His true worshippers^b, and by consequence, the abolition of the Judaic nationalism, and the Catholicity of the religion which was succeeding it^c. And when the question is asked how there can be such true worship without faith in its Object, or faith without a religious education, or this again without a message from heaven, and an authoritative commission to proclaim it^d, the reply is given in the words of the Evangelical Prophet^e, for whose entranced soul the intervening centuries have neither force nor meaning, and the distant and contingent future is a realized and present fact. Along with the messengers who announce to captive Israel the speedy return of peace and freedom, there mingle, in the prophet's vision, other forms of Apostolic mien and greatness, and their footsteps fall on all the mountains of the world, as they carry forward the message which emancipates mankind, and which proclaims an alliance between Earth and Heaven. Yet more, this greatest of the prophets foresees the partial acceptance of the Gospel as accurately as he foretells its universal promulgation^f: and prophecy closes around the Jew, who refuses belief to the report of the Apostles, by describing not merely the Truth which confronts him, but his own attitude towards it. That there may be no mistake as to the weight and pressure of the Jew's responsibility, the Apostle asks

^a ver. 5. Lev. xviii. 5. ver. 6. Deut. xxx. 12—14.

^b ver. 11. Is. xxviii. 16. ver. 13. Joel ii. 32. ^c ver. 12.

^d ver. 14, 15. ^e Is. lii. 7. ^f ver. 16. Is. liii. 1.

in the text somewhat abruptly, whether the men of Israel^g have not heard the Gospel-message. And he answers not by pointing to the literal fact, that already the messengers of Christ had penetrated far and wide into either of the great branches of the Dispersion, while Jerusalem itself was the home and focus of Christian Doctrine: he quotes a psalmist who is singing of the heavenly bodies, and who tells how they speak for the glorious Creator in terms which all can understand, while from day to day and age to age, they hand on their mighty tradition of the Truth, which all the languages of man confess, and all the climes and regions of the earth have heard.

The heavens declare the glory of God,
 And the firmament sheweth His handiwork.
 Day unto day uttereth speech,
 And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
 There is no speech nor language
 Where their voice is not heard:
 Their line is gone out through all the earth,
 And their words to the end of the world^h.

In the translation "their line," the Authorized Version keeps close to the etymology of the original Hebrew: but unprejudiced scholars, (at least on such a point we may trust Ewald and Gesenius,) will tell us, that the line was probably the chord of a musical instrumentⁱ; and that, by a common form of speech, the chord might stand for the sound

^g So Meyer in loc. against Origen, Calvin, Fritzsche, etc. who refer the question to the Heathen, in spite of the obvious connection.

^h Ps. xix. 1—4.

ⁱ Gesen. Lex. s. v. קו. Compare too Thesaurus, p. 1201. where however Professor Roediger seems inclined to adopt Olshausen's 'conjecture' of קלל for קנל, in which he had been anticipated by Bellarmine, (de Verbo Dei, lib. ii. c. 2.) Ewald, Dichter A. B. ii. 28.

guage when he extends an analogy, recognized by the Psalm itself, as existing between the lessons of God's work in nature and the teaching of His Voice to Moses, to the wider comparison of the teaching of the heavens that shine on all climes and races of men, with the world-wide mission of the Church. He is indeed speaking of nothing less than the whole world^p, yet there is no real ground for maintaining that he is speaking hyperbolically; as though he were flourishing a quotation without having ascertained its range of meaning, in other words, without a due sense of the solemn responsibilities of language. We must at least endeavour to place ourselves in the position of the speaker, before we decide upon the force which must be attributed to words of doubtful import. Thus when Obadiah speaks of all the nations and kingdoms of the earth into which Ahab had sent to seek Elijah, he uses the language of an uneducated oriental, with the narrowest political horizon^q. But when our Divine Lord bids His Apostles go teach All Nations, He speaks as One Who from all eternity had shared the Intellectual, no less than the other Glories of the Everlasting Father^r. So when St. Paul tells the Romans^s that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world, he means throughout the world of Apostolic Christendom: when, later he assures the Colossians that

^p It would be absurd to pretend that in adopting the LXX transl. τὰ πάντα τῆς οἰκουμένης, St. Paul was thinking of the Roman Empire. The words εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν would correct this. St. Ambrose christianizes the idea of the word οἰκουμένη. (in Ps. xlviii. ver. 3. ii. 946.

^q 1. Kings xviii. 10.

^r St. John xvii. 5. x. 30. xiv. 9. Compare Col. ii. 3. and Eph. i. 8, 9.

^s Rom. i. 8.

the Gospel which had come to them "is in all the world¹," his intrepid faith already sees the end in its beginning, and like the prophets of the older Covenant he describes a future which had yet to unfold itself, as if it were an accomplished fact. So here, the true sense of the text must be looked for in the parallel which it assumes between the world-embracing light, which streams as a speechless utterance of self-evident Truth from the orbs of Heaven, and the Illumination of the Faith, radiating from the Person of Jesus, and diffused by His Apostles and their representatives through the centuries and countries of the world. It is obvious that St. Paul's quotation is more than sufficient for his immediate purpose. He might have told us much that we yearn to know, about the labours of his brother Apostles : he might have pointed to his own constant presence in the synagogues of the Hellenic Dispersion. But while his question touches merely the labours of the first age of Christendom and the needs and opportunities of a single race ; the answer² carries us up to an ideal or rather a prophetic vision,—the Jew and his responsibilities fade away into the background of thought,—and before us there opens a panorama, comprehending the whole Missionary action of the Church from the labours of the first Apostle on the Day of Pentecost down to the last efforts of those servants whom our Lord will find working and watching when He comes to Judgment. The Apostle reads the history of the Church in the

¹ κόσμῳ not οἰκουμένην. Col. i. 6.

² Some expositors seem to have inferred from the passage, that when St. Paul wrote it, the Gospel was actually being preached in China and America. cf. Meyer in loc.

light of his Master's words : " Go, teach all nations^x." The intervening centuries count for nothing ; just as when we gaze at the fixed star, we do not ordinarily reflect upon that scintillation of the rays of its light through almost measureless space which Science yet reveals to us in all its wonder with minute precision^y. And the Apostle sees all at a single glance : he ignores the alternation of ebb and flow—the constant play of light and shade—which meet us in the actual history of the Church ; we forget, as we read his words, that struggle for life, maintained for centuries,—maintained against overwhelming forces,—maintained amid tears and agony and blood ; we seem to be watching a process which has all the beauty and ease of a natural movement ; we have before us what is less the history of an accomplished and hard-won triumph than it is the spectacle of a beneficent provision or law of the universe, in which there is no struggle, no effort, no jar, no resistance, and in which the Heavenly Wisdom already reaches from one end to another mightily, and smoothly and sweetly ordereth all things^z. " Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world."

The continuous missionary and self-expanding action of the Church is a truth which we generally fall back upon or enforce for the practical purpose of supporting Missions. But it has a distinct speculative value ; it is in itself an evidence of the divinity of Christianity ; its history, often inter-

* St. Matt. xxviii. 19. cf. Ps. lxxii. 11. Hag. ii. 7. St. Matt. xxiv. 14 ; xxv. 32. Acts xvii. 26. Rom. i. 5 ; xvi. 26. Gal. iii. 8. Rev. vii. 9.

^y Humboldt *Cosmos*. iii. p. 259 sqq. cf. p. 110, 111.

^z *Wisd.* viii. 1.

mittent and disappointing, is yet (taken as a whole) a living and perpetual testimony to the presence in Jesus of a something which was higher than the highest human foresight or human genius; it is a feature of Christianity which, if Christianity were not divine, would be nothing less than inexplicable;—it flows from Words of Christ, which if Christ had been merely human, would have been words of startling audacity or of unprecedented folly.

And here are two points that demand our consideration.

1. For our Lord's command and the prophecy of His Apostle imply first of all that the Gospel would stand *the test of time*. Of all forms of power, as of all forms of thought that are merely human, time is the great enemy. No sooner has a doctrine or a system taken its place in the arena of human thought, than, like the ocean which imperceptibly fritters away the base of a mountain cliff, time forthwith begins its relentless work of progressive demolition. Take the case of any human doctrine, which has gained the ear of classes or of races of men, and which accordingly has been formulated by genius, and proclaimed with enthusiasm. A doctrine, let us suppose, which not merely does not rest upon revelation, but which is not exclusively based upon those axioms of mathematics or morals which themselves express truths of the Being and Mind of God. And I say, that such a human speculation will pursue a developement of which the stages can be traced with certainty: it will pass from the energy of its youth, to the self-reliant vigour and system of its manhood, and to the decrepitude and death which are beyond. For

as time passes, men slowly learn the lessons of experience and reflection ; and the titles by which a doctrine can establish permanent empire are very different from those which originally recommend it. It must not merely have created admiration at the first, it must bear the friction of a continuous scrutiny ; it must be able to afford not merely the charm of an hour's entertainment, but the duties of a life-long friendship. Again, time brings with it what we term in our ignorance, chance ; it brings combinations of circumstances, and of agencies to bear, upon which no genius can calculate, and against which no prudence can take its measures. Human annals are rife with the history of dynasties and empires which have survived the resistance of natural and mighty foes, and have succumbed to indirect and accidental dangers ; and herein the thought of man resembles the organisation of his social life, and philosophies like empires have found their doom in influences upon which their framers never lavished so much as a suspicion. Once more, the lapse of time involves the liability to internal decay : those who have reached power, betake themselves to its enjoyment ; those who believe that they are securely masters of the world of thought, are not alive to the decomposition which awaits or preys upon their stagnant system. At one end of a dynasty you admire the hero who founds it by his toils and his sufferings, at the other you turn away in disgust from the effeminacies and luxuries and weaknesses which drain its strength and its life. On the birthday of a philosophy a presiding intellect is moulding thought into new forms, and imparting to it a new impetus ; in its decline, his

feeble representatives are defending positions which an intellectual enemy has already turned, or are obstinately clinging to phrases which have ceased to represent any thing save the dogged determination of their maintainers. For, lastly, as the years pass over a doctrine or a system, they inevitably subject it to the decisive test of opposition. And this not necessarily because it has faults and failings, but because it exists, and by its existence invites hostile criticism, since it drains away something, however little, of the attention, and labour, and substance, which would but for the fact of its existence be bestowed elsewhere. Well has it been said, that, when there is a competition for the means of life, you need only live to provoke hostility : and where a doctrinal system lives in earnest, and demands sacrifice and submission elsewhere, it is certain to be breasted by an opposition as fierce as that which is provoked against political powers who threaten the independence of even the most misgoverned among nations, or the lives of the most guilty of men. To attempt conquest in the intellectual or moral world, cannot but expose the system which does so to a shock of opposition, which combining with such tendencies to dissolution from within as are incident to all that is strictly human, must make its final overthrow a matter of time, and even a matter of approximate calculation.

Need I say it, brethren, that He, Who came from Heaven to redeem and save us, knew what was before Him ? He foresaw the coolness which would succeed to a first fervour of welcome to His Truth ; He allowed for the unfavourable conjunctions of circumstance, and for the intimidation and the errors

of those who might represent Him, and for the opposition which a Gospel, such as His, (making, as it did, no terms with any human feeling or conviction that was inconsistent with the Rights of God,) could not but encounter in the passions of man. He predicted a time when the love of many would wax cold, when His Disciples would be brought before kings and rulers for His Name's sake, when false christs and false prophets would arise, deceiving, if possible, the very elect^a. He accepted, He embraced, He set forth the idea of the intense and fervid hatred which His Gospel must perforce encounter in the world, so energetically, that He, the Prince of Peace, described Himself as sending not peace but a sword^b. Yet foreseeing these elements of destruction gathering around Him, He is calmly certain of the perpetuity of His Doctrine. Heaven and earth, He says, shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away^c. Surely the event has not falsified the prediction. Since the Incarnation, all else has changed; new races, new moulds of thought, new languages, new institutions, political and social, supplant others which once seemed destined to exist for ever, and which have passed away. But, reigning amid the ruins of the past, reigning amid the progress of the present towards the future, Jesus Christ is here; He reigns in the heart and intellect of modern Europe; He reigns here and there, if you will, amid the suspicion, and the feebleness of His worshippers, amid the upgrowth of forces which continually threaten His supremacy, and in spite of the efforts of men who succeed after eighteen centuries to the inherit-

^a St. Matt. xxiv. 9. 11. 12. 24.

^b St. Matt. x. 34.

^c St. Mark xiii. 31.

ance of Pilate and to the task of Judas. And yet, "Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; The Sceptre of Thy Kingdom is a right sceptre. Thine arrows are very sharp, and the people shall be subdued unto Thee, even in the midst among the King's enemies."

You may contend that here and there His work is marred or broken; you may insist on the desolating spread of the great heresies of the first ages, or on the loss of the Churches of the East and of the Church of Cyprian and of Augustine—trampled as these are beneath the feet of the infidel. You may show from history that the great Roman Communion, the largest fraction of existing Christendom, has subjected its polity to an unprimitive jurisdiction, and has surrounded its creed with an incrustation of elements which were at least foreign to the belief of the Early Church. You may follow the track of the Reformation, and mark how all the Churches which took part in that movement, save only the Church of England and a possible fraction of Scandinavian Christendom, forfeited with the Episcopate the organic conditions of true Sacramental life. And then you may turn to our own England, and note our spiritual deadness during the last century, or the heathenism of our great cities, or the ravages of a feeble rationalism among a portion of our educated classes, or the attitude of those more imposing, logical, and fatal forms of destructive thought which rule in some of the Schools of Germany and which threaten us with invasion, or the divisions, and heartburnings, and scandals which paralyse what else were at this hour our mighty strength, as a Church, for God. You

may urge all this and more ; and then ask, if it be indeed true that our Ascended Saviour has redeemed His Promise ? Certainly, I reply, He has redeemed it, and with a surplusage of honour ; He has indeed rejoiced as a giant to run His course ; He has trifled with foes and with dangers which a cautious timidity, could such an attribute have reigned in heaven, might have crushed or have avoided ; His Church, like His Body Crucified, is known by the Five Wounds and the opened Side, and her scars, like His, have been imprinted in the house of friends^d. But now, as of old, He is crucified in weakness, while He reigns in power^e : He is, by the very pressure and fierceness of His foes, uniting friends who have long been sundered : His vast Providences enlist the services even of men who know but fragments of His Truth : He has more loyal hearts who trust and worship Him than in any previous age : He has more tokens of present strength and of future victory than in the days when the kings of Europe were more ostentatiously the nursing fathers of His Church, and its peoples more ready to own themselves her children.

For observe, that He does not merely hold His ground : He is extending His Empire. He has already with but scanty exceptions and by various agencies made the New World his own : He is pushing His advances along the steppes of Northern Tartary and through the deserts of Central Africa. He is again laying siege to those citadels of superstitious yet of philosophical idolatry—the oriental religions—which have so long resisted Him : He is, as we are this day reminded, bidding the islands of the sea

^d Zech. xiii. 6.

^e 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

wait on His advancing Footsteps. This would be indeed passing strange, if it could be supposed that His Gospel was really threatened with dissolution, whenever some fitful gust of negative criticism troubles the upper atmosphere of contemporary thought. They say, that the legions of the falling empire had no heart to face the barbarians on the frontier, while a principle of national and political ruin was throned and crowned at Rome. And the feet of the Church's Missionaries might well falter, and their words would surely die away on their stammering lips, if they should admit the suspicion, that the Faith they were bearing to the heathen could be proved to be less than absolutely certain in itself, or other than an imperious necessity for man. Only they who believe can speak prevailingly for God: Only He Who was, and Who knew Himself to be, the absolute and the highest Truth, could by proclaiming it assure Himself of the possession of an unfailing agency, streaming through the ages and the countries of the world, with the life-giving and penetrating ubiquity of the rays which speak of God as they fall on us men by day and by night from the orbs of heaven.

II. And thus we are led to observe a second feature of the predicted missionary energy of the Church, which, no less than that already mentioned, would seem to possess an evidential value.

For our Lord did not merely insure His Religion against the triumph of those causes which, in the case of human institutions or opinions, must ultimately produce decay and dissolution. The stone which you throw loses force and swiftness as it obeys the impulse you gave to it: it buries itself, we will

suppose, beneath the waters of a still lake, and again the ripple which radiates from the point of disturbance, becomes, moment by moment, less clear to the eye, as on this side and on that its widening circles approach the shore. So it is with human religions : they spend themselves while they gain the prestige of antiquity : and our Lord, as we have seen, reversed this law of exhaustion, in the case of His Gospel. But He did more : He presumed upon, He appealed to, because He knew Himself able to create and to command, an ever-youthful and active enthusiasm, which in the last ages of the Faith, no less than in the first, would carry forward His doctrine into all the regions of the earth, and, at whatever risk, would press it closely in its perfectness and its power on the consciences of men. Look at the other great religions which have ruled, or which still rule, the thought or the heart of the human race. Some of them are of ancient growth : they are the religions of highly-gifted races : they are dominant throughout some of the fairest regions of the globe : nay more, in some cases they cumber lands which were once beautiful with the Faith and Worship of the Redeemer. We Christians indeed study their sacred books, their traditional polities, and their unlovely rites—as for other and graver reasons, so because in these we find interesting records of the early mind and fortunes of great divisions of the human family. But we send to these heathen our own Bible and our Missions, not by way of promoting literary or social intercourse, but as sending to them the message and the gift of Heaven. In wellnigh all the great cities of the East are to be found the representatives of Christ : in

many of them the Missionaries of our own branch of the Christian Church. But who ever heard of a Buddhist Mission in London or in Paris? Where are there societies for translating the Vedas, or the Zendavesta, or the Koran, into all the languages of the world? What effort that is felt beyond the natural limits of race, or the forced limits of empire, have the millions of India or of China made to propagate the thoughtful or the foolish superstitions which they hold for Truth? Where have ancient priesthoods, like the Egyptian, been missionary agencies? Where have philosophical speculations, like those of the Schools of Greece, been more than the luxury and the pride of the selfish few,—where and when have they shown any capacity of becoming the inheritance of the heart and thought of the struggling many? Certainly Mahomedanism has attempted, and at this moment it attempts, a world-wide proselytism: but Mahomet had studied the first six centuries of the Kingdom of the Incarnation; and his great genius is more manifest in nothing than in the fact, that while he borrowed from the Gospel the idea of a mission to mankind without distinction of race or language, he differed from it in entrusting the propagation of his eclectic imposture, not to the native power of its boasted truth, but to the sharp edge of the scymetar, and to the courage of that warrior race from which he sprung. The first Apostles of Islam were beyond doubt great military commanders: its earliest mission was one of the most ruthless wars which have desolated the East. And if to-day this creed may seem to address itself to thought and conscience, in regions where no other form of movement is possible; it is more true to its

traditional methods of action when it organizes a mutiny against Christian rulers in India, or when in the Syrian villages and the streets of Damascus it bathes its sword in Christian blood. It would not be difficult to show by an exhaustive induction that the idea of a Truth—so beautiful in its evident symmetry as to compel the absolute homage of the intellect and of the heart—so strong in this compulsion, that alone and unarmed it can dare to pass forth on the lips of an unlettered Apostolate, to demand submission from the passions and the prejudices of man,—is strictly proper to our Redeemer's Gospel, and undiscoverable elsewhere.

Surely, brethren, it were not unreasonable to surmise, that if the Infinite and Eternal God has spoken in very deed to us His creatures, He can only so have spoken, as at the first He can only have given us being, out of the free and pure love which He bare towards us. And thus along with the gift of truth would come the accompanying gift of love; and we should anticipate what is in fact the case, that He our Incarnate Lord, Whom we worship as the highest and absolute Truth, is also the most tender and indeed boundless Charity. It is by combining in Himself Truth and Love so perfectly, that Jesus, from age to age, commands the most intelligent and the most heroic devotion of which man has ever been capable. For when by Faith and Love, and Sacramental Union, a man has not merely stood face to face with Jesus, but has drawn the strength of thought and desire and action from His Invigorating Life, he intuitively perceives that there is nothing beyond for which the heart or the understanding need further yearn, since

in Jesus the understanding and the heart are satisfied. In such a man we may note this striking and characteristic symptom,—that the passion for novelty, so dominant elsewhere in human life, has ceased, at least to be a ruling power. Where Truth and the King of Truth are as yet unknown, the love of novelty is not merely pardonable, it is a virtue. It is a virtue, because it expresses the fact—that man's real end is an Infinite Being, as his true home is Eternity, and that he cannot so forget his original destiny as to find permanent satisfaction in any thing that is finite and that belongs to time. But those to whom our Living Lord is more than a phantom or a phrase, can echo His Apostle's question from century to century, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life^f." Think not that true devotion to Christ our Lord is a luxury of the Primitive Church, which can find no lasting home in the midst of our modern civilization. It may be true that mutilated creeds cannot provoke, and that coward hearts cannot understand, such devotion. But wherever the truth is taught in its integrity to hearts that are 'honest and good;' the same phenomena of absolute self-devotion will be found to repeat themselves which illustrated so gloriously the first ages and children of the Faith. For Jesus Christ our Lord, in bidding His servants make disciples of all the nations, knew that He had endued human nature with new powers of thought and of action; He knew that He had raised the beggar from the dust to take a place among the princes of the moral world, and that His command, so impossible to unregenerate man, would be obeyed within the Church.

^f St. John vi. 68.

He has, indeed, made men love Himself: He has made Himself the Object of an intense, tender, passionate devotion to millions who have never seen Him with the eye of flesh: and beneath His Throne, Christians have for eighteen centuries been crying with His Apostle, "Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?" For around Him and His work there mantles such a robe of unfailing and ever-youthful beauty, that in His Divine Person, His Human Form, His Words, His world-redeeming Sacrifice, His ceaseless Intercession, His Gift of the Blessed Spirit, His oneness with His people through the Sacraments of His Church, the soul finds that which answers to its highest imaginings no less than to its deepest needs. It finds in Him, as in none else, its rest. And this absolute repose of the soul in the highest Object of truth and of love, does not (as Rationalism would pretend) destroy its intellectual or moral activity; it only changes their direction. The forces which were but now employed in the search for Truth, are, when Truth is found, enlisted in its service, and devoted to illustrate and explain and propagate it. Here is the raw material out of which our Lord fashions and carves by His Providences the missionaries and the martyrs of His Church. And the strong desire to proclaim Him which is inseparable from a true knowledge and love of Jesus, gains a new strength and motive in a contemplation of the nature and destiny of the soul of man. One single soul, one centre of strictly immaterial life, one abyss of being, which once existing never can die, one tenant (it may be) of the most decrepit and unlovely form among the sons of men, yet in itself a capacity for

boundless joy or boundless agony, nay more, a being freely moving towards, while absolutely destined to, an eternity of such agony or such joy,—who can contemplate this living fact, which each of us carries about within him, which to each is his inmost self, and which each may measure, in wellnigh its whole significance, by close and honest self-analysis,—who I say can contemplate it, and not gain a new power of living and of working for that Most Merciful Lord, Who has made the contemplation something else than what but for Him it had been—a fearful, a mysterious agony? For He who said, ‘What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul:’ said also, (Blessed be His name!) ‘In Me ye might have peace^h.’

Now the history of the Church is so interesting beyond any annals which merely touch the material or social or political life of man, because it is an unfolding of the forces thus placed at His Own disposal by our Divine Redeemer in their conflict with the errors and selfishness of the race which He came to save. It is a long response to that command which He first, He last, He alone has dared to give,—to give without giving arms and letters and the ordinary weapons of social or political sway—to give with an accent of certainty that He was giving the motto of human history, and that He would be obeyed—Go teach all nations. Certain of His Doctrine, and certain of His Empire over hearts; certain of the love, the courage, the patience, the heroism, which would from age to age draw strength from His Passion, and push its self-sacrificing devotion, if need be, even to martyrdom—

^h St. Matt. xvi. 26. St. John xvi. 33.

He bade His Disciples Go teach all nations. Foreseeing that mankind, like a sick but wayward child, would refuse the draught of Truth, and would resent its being proffered; foreseeing that the intelligence and resolution of the race would be arrayed against Him; knowing well that the statesmen would resent a doctrine which respected Cæsar but which Cæsar had not authorized, and that the men of genius would be indignant at a Flash of Thought which owed nothing to their penetration and which condemned it as a blindness, and that the people would not brook a command to break with their time-honoured superstitions, and with their consecrated sensualities; foreseeing accurately and in all its bearings each step of that long and agonizing struggle which began when Stephen knelt to die beneath the walls of the Holy City, and which although it ceased for a while and in a sense with the world-famed Edict of Milan, yet under new conditions lasts and shall last to the end of time, whenever there is sin and error on the one side, and love and truth on the other—He bade His followers Go teach all nations. And if ever Christians have forgotten the spirit of their Master's Word and the power of His Doctrine, and have invoked the proselytism of the Sceptre or the worse proselytism of the Sword; this has been mainly in dark times, or in diseased and enfeebled Churches. As a rule, in the primitive, in the mediæval, in the modern period, the Church has trusted herself to the Words of Christ, and has really triumphed just so far as she has done so. Among the many blessings of our modern civilization, and the indirect advantages which God's

goodness wins for us even from the hostile activity of the intellectual and political influences at work around us, we may reckon this ;—that they force us Christians of the Church to look the terms of our Great Charter more fully in the face, and to entrust the interests which we prize most dearly more and more to those moral and spiritual forces, by which throughout the ages of Christendom the sound of Christian doctrine goes forth into all lands most persuasively, and its words unto the ends of the world.

Some thoughts such as these will have occurred to us, who are privileged to be witnesses of this solemn scene to-day. There are men who see in a Bishop's Consecration one of those graceful but meaningless proprieties, whereby high office in the Church as in the State is supposed to be recommended to the imagination and respect of the multitude. There are others who indeed see in it a Religious Act, but only an act of that character which is inseparable from the self-dedication of any human soul to the highest service of the Truth. Yet surely there is more here than a proffer of service, more even than a solemn acceptance and sanction of one who passes to a place of government among Christian people. For us, loyal children of the Church of England, such an event, if the most solemn of its uttered words and transacted forms are to be other than an unreality which yet challenges the Eye and the approval of the Most Holy ; for us a Bishop's Consecration is the active assertion of an essential principle of organic Life in the Church of Jesus ; it is an act, which at a period when the Canon of the New Testa-

ment was yet unformed, and for fifteen centuries continuously, was believed by Christendom to be absolutely indispensable to the transmission of Grace and Truth in their entirety, from the Redeemer's Person to the souls of men. And therefore to-day does not merely call up historical associations that tell of God's past mercies towards His Church;—such as are provoked, My Lord Archbishop, almost inevitably in this place, and by your Grace's presence, since they cluster in a profusion, unrivalled elsewhere in England, around your Throne of Canterbury. Nor may we pause too curiously to speculate upon the providential destinies of a See, whose occupant on the one hand might seem to have peculiar opportunities for carrying the Knowledge and the Love of Jesus among the fleets and seamen whether of the Tyre or of the Tarshish of the modern world; and who on the other may, from his geographical position, be enabled as none else to bind closer the bonds of belief and affection which already unite the English Church to the Church of the nascent Confederacy. Blessed privilege! thus even remotely by encouragement and counsel, to aid in the overthrow of that miserable legacy bequeathed by English rule to England's ancient colonies, and to free the African race from a bondage, which beneath the very shadow of Christ's Emancipating Cross, outrages the rights of our common manhood. But it were presumptuous to dwell on these high yet precarious anticipations; and duties of another order claim our earnest attention during the solemn moments which will presently follow. If our hearts swell with thankfulness to our Adorable Lord, for this fresh illustration of the living mission

of His Church, certain of her doctrine and certain of her power to carry it forward ; if with St. Paul, the present scene seems almost to fade from before us, as we lose it in the contemplation of that glorious whole of which it is a real albeit a fractional part—the perpetual Missionary Agency of the Church, radiating like the light of heaven through the countries and the centuries of the world ;—let us at least not forget what is due to him, to whom beyond all others this day all true and Christian hearts will now turn with the homage of a sincere and respectful sympathy. He needs, he asks our most earnest prayers, that that elevation of his to the Chief Pastorate of a Flock of Christ, in which we gratefully own our share in the Church's joy and gain, may not turn to his own or to his Master's loss ; and that he may carry forward Christ's true work, by attaining in himself more and more that which is indeed the spirit of predestined Apostles, and the earnest of their victories,—the spirit of freedom—of freedom from all fears save the fear of God, and of freedom from all ambitions save the one legitimate, masterful, life-absorbing desire to be Christ's alone,—His perfectly,—His for ever.



